

my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), because he has been right by my side in fighting for what I believe is justice here, especially for the victims.

The important point, Mr. Speaker, is that these people who still to this day offer no remorse, no apologies to the victims, not even a call; I doubt very much if the White House or the Attorney General's Office has even called Diana Berger who lost her husband, or Joseph and Thomas Connor who lost their father or the Richard Pastorell who lost his sight or Anthony Semft who lost his vision or Rocko Pasceralla, a police officer who lost his leg. I doubt very much if they have even gotten a phone call and, meanwhile, we have terrorists out on the street who feel committed to engage in a reign of terror against this Nation. It is ridiculous, and I think the American people deserve to know some answers.

THE INTERNET—AVOIDING MONOPOLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, at the very time that we need to increase competition in the delivery of Internet services, I am afraid that the unregulated nature of the Internet is in danger of being compromised.

We talk about a new digital revolution. We talk about all the fruits that the Internet is bringing to us. But I am afraid that we are on a collision course between reregulation and this unregulated revolution that is doing so much good for so many people.

The Internet is growing at a staggering pace, one that we could not have imagined when we passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This astonishing growth creates an urgent need for high-speed Internet capacity at both the regional and the local level so that all Americans can participate in this new digital economy. With each announcement of yet another telecommunications merger, or as we say telecom merger, I become increasingly concerned about the concentration in the Internet backbone market, a monopoly, a cartel. Today, the four largest backbone network providers control more than 85 percent of the Internet data traffic in this country, 85 percent.

Mr. Speaker, probably as a result of this, we are already hearing calls for regulating the Internet. If we do not act now, an Internet cartel may emerge that can dictate price and availability to consumers. Mr. Speaker, this is a much more attractive and desirable alternative to reregulation. The rules should be changed to allow all telecommunications companies to compete in the market. It makes no sense to keep the five of the most capable competitors, the regional bell operating companies, from building re-

gional backbone networks to deliver the fruits of the digital economy to many more Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues, all of my fellow Members to support competition in the Internet backbone market, and I encourage this body to act with the utmost speed. If we fail to act promptly, if we fail to assure competition, the alternative may sadly be the Internet regulation act of 2000.

THE ECONOMY, THE BUDGET, AND SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to kind of review the events of the last year in terms of the budget situation that we are in with the House. As my colleagues know, the House convened in January and at that time, the President of the United States stood in that well and proposed that we spend 40 percent of the Social Security surplus. He said, I think we should only reserve 60 percent and dedicate the rest to a number of programs that he had outlined in his presentation.

Well, we on the Republican side and many of the Democrats said, you know what, Mr. President, we want to preserve 100 percent of Social Security. Because after all, if one is an employee in a factory and one works and one puts money aside in a retirement plan, when one retires, by law, that plan has to be there; that money has to be there for you. Only in the United States of America can we mix a retirement plan with operating expenses, and we call that Social Security, and it is wrong.

This time, things have been different. For the first time in modern history, the U.S. Congress has not spent one dime of Social Security on anything else but Social Security. It is very significant.

So now we are in this budget negotiation. The genesis of the budget agreement was 1997 and there was a bipartisan budget agreement. Democrat Members, Republican Members, the White House, the Senate, the House, everybody signed off on a bipartisan agreement to get spending under control. I think as a result of that, partly, but mostly because of the strong economy, the budget has now become balanced. That is to say, we do not have a deficit, yet we still have a debt. We have a debt of \$5.4 trillion.

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That money, Mr. Speaker, has to be paid by our children if we do not do anything about it. So I do not think it is just good enough for us to pat ourselves on the back that we have eliminated the deficit. We have to go back and pay off the debt.

So right now we have this budget agreement in place, and that has been the guide for 13 different appropriation

bills. Most of these have passed the House and the Senate, and they are at the White House. A few of them are going to be done in the next, probably 5 legislative days. Yet the President has already vetoed the foreign aid bill. He wants us to spend more money on foreign aid. So we say to the President and AL GORE, because the vice president is very much involved in this process, we say, Mr. GORE, Mr. Clinton, where do you want the money to come from for more foreign aid?

We do not think the House has the will to raise taxes and, indeed, yesterday by a vote of 419 to 0, Democrats joined Republicans in rejecting the Clinton-Gore tax package, 419 to 0. To increase taxes, that is not an option.

Spending Social Security, I think now the President has backed off spending the 40 percent of the Social Security surplus; and he has joined Republicans saying, okay, let us do what businesses do. Let us preserve 100 percent of it.

So if we are not going to get money out of Social Security, and we agree on that and we are not going to get money out of raising taxes, then where are you going to get the money, Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton, to spend more money on foreign aid?

Now, I do not think we should spend more money on foreign aid. I think the foreign aid bill this year is one of the lowest bills we have had in many years. The taxpayers of America are fed up with foreign aid. I supported the package because it was a good reduction in foreign aid, but now Mr. GORE and Mr. Clinton want to raise it. We are saying, it cannot be gotten out of Social Security. It cannot be gotten out of taxes. The only thing that can be done is hold the line on spending, and we hope that they will join us in that effort.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KINGSTON. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when the gentleman was talking about foreign aid, it reminded me, he is very familiar with the fact that in my district, along with the district of the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON), we have had devastating floods; and the people in my district are asking me how can the President want to increase foreign aid when the people of eastern North Carolina as well as many farmers throughout this country that were devastated by drought, why we do not take some of that money and give it back to the taxpayer that is paying for this foreign aid.

So I wanted just to thank the gentleman because I will say quite frankly, it is becoming an issue that I hear almost daily from the citizens of eastern North Carolina who have been devastated. They want some of this money that is going to foreign aid to stay here in America to help the taxpayer.

FOREIGN AID SHOULD NOT BE INCREASED

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISAKSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, if I might ask the gentleman, because, again, I took his time and I apologize, but if he would please respond and help me explain to the people in my district.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, let me say to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES), he has a genuine problem. I represent coastal Georgia and we were scared to death. I and my family and loved ones and all of my friends participated in one of the largest peacetime evacuations in the history of the country. In fact, I think it was the largest. I know what the hurricane and the floods have done to North Carolina, and I know that the gentleman does have towns that are under water. I know that hog farms have floated away, and I know that one million chickens have been drowned and there has been a huge dent in the food supply, the personal suffering of people. I understand that that damage, although no one has a real grip on it, may be as high as \$2.2 billion.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. KINGSTON. Yet the President wants to increase foreign aid \$2.2 billion.

Those people have not paid taxes. The good people in North Carolina have paid taxes.

What are we doing? We have a flood, a major disaster in one of our own States, and it is going to be about \$2 billion; but the President has chosen, instead, to veto foreign aid and wants to spend an extra \$2 billion of hard-working taxpayer monies and send it to Communist countries like North Korea.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I will say that the gentleman is right on target because the people of eastern North Carolina have been devastated. They keep telling me that they want this Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, to understand that the American people, when they have a need, should come first. To try to expand this foreign aid bill by \$2 billion to \$3 billion is unacceptable to the people of my district and the district of the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON), I can assure the gentleman.

Mr. KINGSTON. I think that it is the intention of the House that before we increase foreign aid, we want to take care of the good people of North Carolina.

Again, I want to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, we want 100 percent of the So-

cial Security Trust Fund protected and kept for Social Security. We do not want to increase taxes and we showed that yesterday by a vote of 419 to 0, no tax increase. The only place to get the money is to reduce spending, create some savings within the existing budget so that we can distribute it fairly and evenly and use common sense as the rule of thumb.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2466, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. REGULA (during the Special Order of Mr. PALLONE) submitted the following conference report and statement on the bill (H.R. 2466) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

CONFERENCE REPORT (H. REPT. 106-406)

The committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2466) "making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes", having met, after full and free conference, have agreed to recommend and do recommend to their respective Houses as follows:

That the House recede from its disagreement to the amendment of the Senate, and agree to the same with an amendment, as follows:

In lieu of the matter stricken and inserted by said amendment, insert:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT OF LANDS AND RESOURCES

For expenses necessary for protection, use, improvement, development, disposal, cadastral surveying, classification, acquisition of easements and other interests in lands, and performance of other functions, including maintenance of facilities, as authorized by law, in the management of lands and their resources under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, including the general administration of the Bureau, and assessment of mineral potential of public lands pursuant to Public Law 96-487 (16 U.S.C. 3150(a)), \$644,218,000, to remain available until expended, of which \$2,147,000 shall be available for assessment of the mineral potential of public lands in Alaska pursuant to section 1010 of Public Law 96-487 (16 U.S.C. 3150); and of which not to exceed \$1,000,000 shall be derived from the special receipt account established by the Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965, as amended (16 U.S.C. 4601-6a(i)); and of which \$2,500,000 shall be available in fiscal year 2000 subject to a match by at least an equal amount by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, to such Foundation for cost-shared projects supporting conservation of Bureau lands and such funds shall be advanced to the Foundation as a lump sum grant without regard to when expenses are incurred; in addition, \$33,529,000 for Mining Law Administration program operations, including the cost of administering the mining claim fee program; to remain available until expended, to be reduced by amounts collected by the Bureau and credited to

this appropriation from annual mining claim fees so as to result in a final appropriation estimated at not more than \$644,218,000, and \$2,000,000, to remain available until expended, from communication site rental fees established by the Bureau for the cost of administering communication site activities, and of which \$2,500,000, to remain available until expended, is for coalbed methane Applications for Permits to Drill in the Powder River Basin: Provided, That unless there is a written agreement in place between the coal mining operator and a gas producer, the funds available herein shall not be used to process or approve coalbed methane Applications for Permits to Drill for well sites that are located within an area, which as of the date of the coalbed methane Application for Permit to Drill, are covered by: (1) a coal lease; (2) a coal mining permit; or (3) an application for a coal mining lease: Provided further, That appropriations herein made shall not be available for the destruction of healthy, unadopted, wild horses and burros in the care of the Bureau or its contractors.

WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT

For necessary expenses for fire preparedness, suppression operations, emergency rehabilitation and hazardous fuels reduction by the Department of the Interior, \$292,282,000, to remain available until expended, of which not to exceed \$9,300,000 shall be for the renovation or construction of fire facilities: Provided, That such funds are also available for repayment of advances to other appropriation accounts from which funds were previously transferred for such purposes: Provided further, That unobligated balances of amounts previously appropriated to the "Fire Protection" and "Emergency Department of the Interior Firefighting Fund" may be transferred and merged with this appropriation: Provided further, That persons hired pursuant to 43 U.S.C. 1469 may be furnished subsistence and lodging without cost from funds available from this appropriation: Provided further, That notwithstanding 42 U.S.C. 1856d, sums received by a bureau or office of the Department of the Interior for fire protection rendered pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1856 et seq., protection of United States property, may be credited to the appropriation from which funds were expended to provide that protection, and are available without fiscal year limitation: Provided further, That not more than \$58,000 shall be available to the Bureau of Land Management to reimburse Trinity County for expenses incurred as part of the July 2, 1999 Lowden Fire.

CENTRAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS FUND

For necessary expenses of the Department of the Interior and any of its component offices and bureaus for the remedial action, including associated activities, of hazardous waste substances, pollutants, or contaminants pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq.), \$10,000,000, to remain available until expended: Provided, That notwithstanding 31 U.S.C. 3302, sums recovered from or paid by a party in advance of or as reimbursement for remedial action or response activities conducted by the department pursuant to section 107 or 113(f) of such Act, shall be credited to this account to be available until expended without further appropriation: Provided further, That such sums recovered from or paid by any party are not limited to monetary payments and may include stocks, bonds or other personal or real property, which may be retained, liquidated, or otherwise disposed of by the Secretary and which shall be credited to this account.

CONSTRUCTION

For construction of buildings, recreation facilities, roads, trails, and appurtenant facilities, \$11,425,000, to remain available until expended.

PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES

For expenses necessary to implement the Act of October 20, 1976, as amended (31 U.S.C. 6901-